

"Lady Don, by desire of the author." . . . You be surprised at my sending a light novel, and finding a muse in an old lady of seventy ; but in truth she is the cleverest and most charming woman I ever met . and the only person I know who gives one the least idea of the Madame du Tencins and the other *brillantes*, who flirted with Renault, chatted with Montesquieu, and corresponded with Horace Walpole.'

The original intention of the two friends had been to hasten on to Malta, but they were so delighted with their first glimpse of Spain that they lingered for a couple of months. ' I travelled through the whole of Andalusia on horseback,' Disraeli wrote to Austen, 'I was never less than ten hours out of the twenty-four on my steed, and more than once saw the sun set and rise without quitting my saddle, which few men can say, and which I never wish to say again. I visited Cadiz, Seville, Cordova, and Granada, among many other cities which must not be named with these romantic towns. I sailed upon the Guadalquivir, I cheered at the bull fights ; I lived for a week among brigands and wandered in the fantastic halls of the delicate Alhambra. Why should I forget to say that I ate an *olla podrida* ? I will not weary you with tales of men of buckram; they must be reserved for our fireside. I entered Spain a sceptic with regard to their robbers, and listened to all their romances with a smile. I lived to change my opinion. I at length found a country where adventure is the common course of existence.' Leaving Gibraltar he rode in a couple of days to Cadiz, gazing by the way across those ' sublime' Straits, where ' Europe and Africa frown on each other,' at the picturesque beauty of the 'sultry sister.' Cadiz he found brilliant beyond description. "' Fair Florence "' is a very dingy affair compared with it. The white houses and the green jalousies sparkle in the sun. Figaro is in every street; Rosina in every balcony.'